

My name is Oprah Paige and I'm a Certified Nursing Assistant at Charlesgate Nursing Center. I've worked here since 2008. I work in healthcare because I like being helpful to people who are not able to do things for themselves. We can be there when their loved ones, family members cannot. We are there for them.

Being a Nursing Assistant lets me give back to my community. My skills help me take care of my own family when they're sick or if you see anyone on the street having a stroke, we have the skills to respond.

We're professionals, but we don't get paid like professionals. After 13 years, I make a little over \$15.00 per hour. I have to pick up overtime or pick up another job as per diem and still it's a struggle to pay my bills. One job should be enough to take us through. I don't live lavishly. I can't afford to go on vacation and pay my bills. My three kids are all grown now, I have five grand kids. But I went through a very, very hard time when my kids were young. Trying to care for them while picking up overtime just to pay the bills, it was so hard.

We work short a lot. When we work short and I have 13 or 14 residents, as much as I hurry, they have to wait for their basic care. When we work short, it's hell. It's hard on our residents and hard on our bodies. When I have to transfer residents to the hooyer lift, to the shower, to their chair, to their bed. My back aches, my legs hurt. This job is very physically demanding.

But as hard as I try, if we work short, sometimes the residents have to wait. These were teachers, firefighters, police officers. And now they have to wait to use the bathroom. It's not fair to them.

We need help and we need you to pass the Nursing Home Safe Staffing and Quality Care Act (H5012).

Thank you.

Oprah Paige, CNA  
Providence

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